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ABSTRACT

Building on the theorem that a positive self-identity is fundamental to completion of an education, a study was conducted to learn how schools with differing backgrounds affected the ethnic identity of students. Two schools in Denver (Colorado) were selected for this case study. "Broderick High School" is a large public school whose enrollment was mostly Anglo until the mid-1960s, when a large number of Chicanos began attending. Escuela Tlatelolco, is a small, private, Chicanocentric high school founded in 1970 to serve Chicano students. Interviews with 20 Chicano graduates of the two schools as well as interviews and observations of school staff and students examined the methods each school used to transmit a sense of ethnic identity and pride, encourage academic achievement, and counsel Chicano students concerning pursuit of higher education and employment. Six themes emerged: low academic expectations from teachers and counselors were often overcome through intervention by a member of the Hispanic community; minority students internalized the negative views of others toward them; Chicanos faced discrimination and racism at school, college, and work; all but one participant expressed the importance of their ethnic identity; the concept of returning something to the Hispanic community was strong among those who participated in the Chicano movement in the late 1960s; and Chicano college organizations helped many participants cope with college. Nine recommendations are given for successfully educating children from different cultures. (Contains 141 references and author and subject indexes.) (TD)

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